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SUBJECT: DAILY IRAQI WEBSITE MONITORING - October 10, 2005

SUMMARY: Discussions of civil status law in the draft constitution; civil democratic participation; and Iraq after the referendum were the major editorial themes of Iraqi, Arabic language websites on October 10, 2005. END SUMMARY.

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SELECTED COMMENTARIES

[1A.](#) "Apprehension . in Overtime"
(Editorial by Fatih Abdul Salam - Iraq 4 All News -
<http://iraq4all.org/viewnews.php?id=10280>)

"I was listening to Iraqi President Jalal Al-Talabani's speech, at the Churchill Hotel in London, about supporting the constitution when an Iraqi lady asked: 'What will the role of civil status laws be in dealing with women if the constitution permits courts to determine laws independently?'

"This question has special impact because it comes at a critical time, only a few days before the constitutional referendum. It seemed to reveal a great deal of anxiety about the many possibilities to which the constitution could lead. The constitution opens the door to many interpretations and would require an authority greater than the constitution to sort out the loose ends.

"This clever question was presented by a desperate woman who knew that no answer could be found in 'overtime,' and millions of uneducated women will face the same question in coming days. A woman in an ethnically and religiously diverse society may not be able to guarantee her freedom of choice over the religious court that represents her, especially if members of her family oppose that option. And this is only one simple example of potential consequences overlooked by the constitution.

"This lady's question draws attention to the fact that the constitution's articles cannot protect Iraq from division, nor can any other political hero. From an international and political point of view, Iraq is not divisible, but we should be wary of internal differences that would leave Iraqis uneasy regarding their social relations, as well as their civil rights, which could affect their families and society.

"Civil status laws have been suppressed; there was no official declaration announcing their elimination in favor of an agreement that does not seem to be very strong.while not very weak either."

[1B.](#) "Don't Rip Down the Constitution Advertisements"
(Editorial by Hamza Al-Shamkhi - Watan Lil Jamee - "Homeland 4 All" -
<http://wattan4all.com/viewarticle.php?id=5646 &pg=articles>)

"A referendum in any country, including Iraq, is a reflection of the democracy we all seek after an era of single-party dictatorship, accompanied by wars and destruction. Iraqis have the date of October 15th for their constitutional referendum; it will provide Iraqis with the opportunity to exercise their natural right to say 'Yes' or 'No' to the constitution, representing one stage of democracy.

"Regrettably, we have seen and heard of organized groups that are ripping up referendum advertisements and posters in Iraqi cities in an attempt to terrorize and harass voters. They serve the interests of the enemies of Iraq and the democratic transformation; they are trying to escalate armed attacks and drag the country back to the times of dictatorship and war. At the same time, parties, political groups, and personalities have the right to oppose or express reservations over certain items of the constitution

and they have the right to educate people to vote 'No' and work to reach suitable alternatives. After that, Iraqis can choose their constitution freely and transparently instead of tearing down referendum advertisements, fighting voters, and using other methods that contradict a human's rights to vote and choose.

"We should all stand in the face of these uncivilized and undemocratic methods that seek to deprive our nation of its right to choose its political path in the present and future, and derail the political process of Iraqis who seek a free, democratic, and federal Iraq. You should vote 'Yes' or 'No' instead of tearing down referendum and election posters."

1C. "What Comes After the Constitutional Referendum?"
(Editorial by Saif Allah Ali - Sawt Al-Iraq - "Voice of Iraq" - <http://www.sotaliraq.com/articles-iraq/nieuws.php?id=17074>)

"It is undoubtedly a sacred national duty for all Iraqis to vote in favor of the constitution; this will occur despite all the impediments to democracy and freedom that were set by enemies in Iraq, enemies in other Arab countries, and the Persians. This constitution will be accepted because it meets all aspirations of the Iraqi people who offered sacrifices for this great day. These sacrifices forced the most powerful country in the world to interfere to root out the regime that planted itself in Iraq after it [America] witnessed the injustice of Arab rule over Shiites and Kurds.

"I am absolutely sure that America participated with all its might to save Iraq from Arab bastards; it brought in the Iraqi opposition parties who fled Iraq because of the former regime's oppression. It [America] formed a short-term and low-risk government knowing that most of its members were fortune seekers despite their patriotism; it gave them the opportunity to rule until the referendum.

"After the referendum a new government will be made of 'native' Iraqis only [as opposed to those who were living abroad] with foreign advisors. America will kill two birds with one stone: first it will curb the 'foreign' government on the basis that it ruled long enough and proved its failure; second it will give the 'native' patriots the chance to run the country on the basis that they are more aware of the problems than those who were abroad. This will bring stability to Iraq because it will satisfy all 'native' parties. It is certain that the 'native' government will strike with an iron fist everyone who toys with Iraqi security, especially if the government is a permanent elected government."

KHALILZAD